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ABSTRACT

The program was reorganized with the following objectives: 1) to provide a closer relationship between course theory and classroom practice; 2) to provide interns with more meaningful early contact with children; 3) to provide interns with controlled exposure to classroom teaching; 4) to enable interns to study the school as a social institution and business operation; 5) to provide for better utilization of school, university, and supervisory staff; 6) to interrelate on-campus methods courses through team teaching; and 7) to provide a closer relationship between school and university by using members from both facilities in teams. The program combines modular method courses involving an intensive study of a single subject followed by an intensive laboratory experience in that subject in an elementary classroom, a general seminar, laboratory and clinical experiences, and a team teaching approach in a single time unit consisting of 4 morning hours during one semester. The staff consists of a coordinator of the semester, five methods professors, and three resource teachers. The feedback obtained strongly supports the program. The interns feel much better prepared to enter the classroom, the methods professors have reacted positively to the school-university cooperation, and the resource teachers have also reacted positively. The major problem concerned role identification and function, but this was solved as the transition took place. (MBM)

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Graduate Intern Program
in Elementary Education
University of Wisconsin - Madison

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I. Development

The Graduate Intern Program, a modified Master of Arts in Teaching program, at the University of Wisconsin consisted of a sequence of courses and experiences which normally required two semesters and two summer sessions for completion time. The program consisted of a series of prerequiste and required courses in Education Psychology, Education Policies, Teaching Methods, and Clinical Experiences. After approximately 24 graduate credit hours, 32 total credit hours, a masters paper and a masters exam, the student who entered with a liberal arts degree graduated with certification for teaching in grades 1-8 and a Masters Degree in Education.

Dissatisfaction with the program was evident. Students were concerned by the lack of relevance, continuity, and general applicability of their on-campus experiences to that required of them during their clinical and post-graduation needs. Public school administrators and teachers occasionally cast an eye of disapproval at the intern during the clinical phase and even after graduation, the primary reason being the apparent lack of readiness to cope with the many problems in teaching. The current faculty felt uncomfortable as well. They expressed concern about the product of their efforts and considered the possible cause to lie in the process.

A committee of faculty was appointed to study the program and to return with recommendations. Initial efforts of the committee centered around gathering information from the three primary sources of concerned people: the students, the public school personnel, the faculty. Subsequent committee activities centered around building a program which seemed to

meet the general needs of each group. The following recommendations, listed as program objectives, were informally approved by the students and public school consultant and were accepted by the elementary education faculty.

II. Objectives of the Reorganization

As a result of a reorganization, the Graduate Intern Program will:

1) provide a closer and more meaningful relationship between course theory and classroom practice.

2) provide the interns with more meaningful early contacts with children.

3) provide the interns with a gradual controlled exposure to classroom teaching.

4) provide the interns with an opportunity to study the school as a social institution and as a business operation.

5) provide for better utilization of public school staff, university faculty and university supervisory staff through the placement of interns in a concentrated area.

6) provide the vehicle for inter-relating on-campus methods courses through team teaching.

7) provide for a closer relationship between the public schools and the university in preparing teachers by utilizing an on-campus, off-campus team comprised of members from both faculties.

III. Model

A Professional Education Semester

The new program organization combines: 1) modular method courses, 2) a general seminar, 3) laboratory and clinical experiences, 4) a team teaching approach in a single time unit consisting of four morning hours, during one semester of the academic year.

1) Modular Method Courses

A modular approach to the methods courses for the graduate intern program features the intensive study of the content and methodology of a single subject at the university followed by an intensive laboratory experience in that subject in an elementary classroom. The intensive study of a single subject at the university is achieved through a redistribution of conventional time allotments for courses. In the modular approach, the typical one-sementer course is compressed into three weeks of full morning instruction followed by an immediate two-week, full morning laboratory experience. Figure A illustrates this scheme over a 15-week semester. Weeks 1, 2, and 3 (module #1) are devoted to Reading (1½ hours daily) and Language Arts (1½ hours daily). Weeks 6, 7, and 8 of module #2 center on Mathematics and Science, while in module #3 (weeks 11, 12, and 13) Social Studies and Independent Study are the focus. Time distribution remains equal for each segment (22½ hours per content area), and courses meet on campus. Content of these methods segments emphasize that which is idiosyncratic to the area. Six credits at the 300 graduate level are granted for completion of the methods courses..

2) General Seminar

The fourth hour of each morning is devoted to participation in a general seminar. The function of the general seminar is to provide coordination for the three hours of daily instruction in content fields, and in that sense, serve as an extension of each methods course. In addition, general seminar deals with teaching strategies, planning and evaluation techniques, general methods and other elements common to

instruction. Figure B illustrates how methods are incorporated into the general seminar. For example, during week one of module one (Reading-Language Arts) the content of the seminar may be devoted to the fundamental considerations of planning, observation techniques, and teaching strategies (emphasis is on the individual pupil). The nature of these elements has direct applicability to the content of the preceding methods presentations, thereby avoiding the necessity of consuming methods-oriented hours in discussing these factors while at the same time avoiding the necessity of treating these concepts in discrete terms. An organizing strand such as "teaching strategies" has continued relevance and increased utility for the student throughout the professional semester and can be expanded accordingly through concentrating on the individual pupil during the reading and language arts module, small group practices for math and science, and total group strategies in module #3. During the six field experience weeks seminars may be held once a week or more often as needed. Discussion focuses on classroom implementation of content areas currently under study. These seminars are held in the cooperating school buildings and are conducted by the three public school team members. Three credits of graduate level credit are granted for participating in the general seminar.

During the professional methods semester, interns are encouraged to take one additional course in their program, preferably a course in learning or in developmental psychology.

3) <u>Laboratory and Clinical Experiences</u>

During the last two weeks of each module (weeks 4 and 5, 9 and 10,

14 and 15) the student is afforded the opportunity to devote an entire morning to experience in the classroom. The nature of this activity will vary as a function of time, content exposure, and classroom contacts. The first laboratory periods, for example, might find the intern planning and holding individual reading conferences, experimenting with limited, small group spelling instruction, or developing observation techniques. The basic content focus of successive laboratory segments shifts to reflect the content orientation of the preceding module as expectations of student classroom behavior grow increasingly sophisticated.

4) Team Teaching

A central unifying dimension of the new program is the utilization of teaching-supervising teams; a team teaching approach in which the team is composed of university professors, university instructors, graduate students in teacher education, and carefully selected public school teachers. In each of the modules, a team of teacher-supervisors is responsible for the teaching and follow-up supervision of a maximum of students. With the exception of a different specialist professor in charge of each of the methods portions of each module, the teaching-supervising team follows the students through the entire module. This practice assures the effective implementation of appropriate theoretical learnings in the laboratory setting.

A typical module might emphasize differentiated staffing patterns in the content segment with methods professors and resource teachers jointly planning and implementing instruction. The coordinator of the professional semester and the resource teachers are responsible for the general seminar during this same segment. During the laboratory segment,

however, the entire team, now composed of methods professor, resource teachers, and cooperating public school staff, share responsibility for the classroom experiences as well as the in-school methods seminar.

IV. Staffing: Personnel and Job Description

1) Coordinator of Professional Semester

This full time person is responsible for coordinating all facets of the professional semester including methods blocks, the general seminar, and supervision. He is also generally responsible for maintaining maximum continuity between the components as well as for the requisite communication and organization. All public school-university communications are channeled through this person. Therefore, he assumes responsibility for public school-university public relations and necessary information dissemination. It is recommended that this person be of professorial rank.

2) Five Methods Professors

These professors are responsible for determining the relevant content experiences in each methods area, the resource teacher's work in the methods blocks, supervision in the public school, and related field seminars and in-service and consultation with cooperating public school personnel.

3) Three Resource Teachers

All resource teachers generally are responsible to the coordinator of the professional semester. Resource teachers hold major operational responsibility for maintaining continuity within the clinical-methods-

supervision scheme. Resource teachers are responsible to appropriate methods professors for methods component activities. Resource teachers hold dual appointments to public schools and the university and are selected on-leave personnel from the public schools for the express purpose of this teacher education assignment. Resource teachers are selected by a team composed of the coordinator, methods representative(s), and designated public school representative(s).

V. Contribution to Improvement of Teacher Education

Three definitive role positions are affected in this cooperative approach to teacher education between the public schools of Madison and the University of Wisconsin. The three positions contributing to improvement in teacher education are: the professional staff at the University; the graduate interns; the staff of the Madison Public Schools.

A. University Staff

In previous programs, the independent and individual methods courses remained as separate entities in themselves; there was often a repetition of teaching methods and little inter-relatedness between courses. The present program is a cooperative effort based on a team approach to teaching methods courses. This team approach in methods, with the addition of a seminar, not only eliminates duplication but enhances and relates content between methods courses.

The university methods professors are in a position to utilize the experience of the resource teachers in the methods presentations, and in developing resources and materials. This association between professors

and resource teachers, aids in eliminating the difficulties encountered between theory and actual practice in the public schools. The resource teacher acts in a dual capacity as representative of public school teachers and university faculty in relating theory to relevant classroom experience.

Following the three weeks of methods presentation, the professors and staff are involved observing and instructing interns and teachers within the public schools. This enables them to observe the intern needs and immediately relate this to possible evaluation of their own effectiveness as a teacher; in addition, they are able to view, first hand, the difficulties encountered by public school teachers and aid those wishing assistance.

B. Graduate Interns

Because he enters public schools in an instructional capacity following the methods course, the intern is able immediately to test out possible approaches to instruction, receiving immediate feedback from methods professors and public school staff.

Previously, the intern received little or no actual classroom experience before taking on full classroom responsibility. In this program there is a gradual introduction to classroom experience, first working either individually or in small groups and gradually extending to large group presentations. The progress of the intern toward large group instruction is determined in cooperation with his cooperating teacher, resource teacher, and methods professor. Primary concern is that he feels capable and comfortable in the classroom while engaged in a positive experience.

This approach allows the intern to test out materials while receiving feedback and observing alternatives available in the public schools.

C. Public Schools

Many advantages exist when the public schools and the university are involved in a joint effort of this kind. First is the possibility to improve relationships between the university and the public schools through understanding each others programs. Since both institutions are mutually and equally involved, there is a mutual concern for improvement and success within the program. The public schools provide personnel to work directly with the university and classrooms within which the students work. The university in return provides the public schools with in-service instruction through the methods professors while they are actively involved with interns in the public schools. During this time the cooperating teachers are able to give methods professors feedback concerning the effectiveness of their methods courses as they apply to the classroom. Too often the professional staffs in teacher education fail to perceive the problems faced by the professional staffs of school systems. This program activates communication and concern by both facets of teacher education; thus, facilitating growth, creativity, and understanding.

VI. Evaluation

The feedback gathered to this point strongly supports the program. The interns feel much more prepared to enter the classroom; the methods professors have reacted positively to the interaction among them and between the public schools and the university; the resource teachers have related a positive reaction to the contributory role of the public schools.

The major transition problem concerned role identification and function. In each case the interns, professors, cooperating teachers, and resource teachers, experienced roles which were different from previous ones. As the transition took place, however, the roles became clear and complimentary.

Figure A

PROFESSIONAL SEMESTER

Module #1					Module #2					Module #3				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Rdg. 1½ hrs. daily	Rdg. 1½ hrs. daily	Rdg. 1½ hrs. daily	Lab. and Clinc. Exp. in Rdg. and Lang. Arts 3 hrs. daily	Lab. and Clinc. Exp. in Rdg. and Lang. Arts 3 hrs. daily	Math 1½ hrs. daily	Math 1½ hrs. daily	Math 1½ hrs. daily	Lab. and Clinc. Exp. in Math and Sci. 3 hrs. daily	Lab. and Clinc. Exp. in Math and Sci. 3 hrs. daily	Soc. Stds. 1½ hrs. daily	Soc. Stds. 1½ hrs. daily	Soc. Stds. 1½ hrs. daily	Lab. and Clinc. Exp. in Soc. Stds. 3 hrs. daily	Lab. and Clinc. Exp. in Soc. Stds. 3 hrs. daily
Lang. Arts 1½ hrs. daily	Lang. Arts 1½ hrs. daily	Lang. Arts 1½ hrs. daily			Sci. 1½ hrs. daily	Sci. 1½ hrs. daily	Sci. 1½ hrs. daily			Ind. Study dir. by Mthds Profs	Ind. Study dir. by Mthds Profs	Ind. Study dir. by Mthds Profs		
Gen. Sem. 1 hr. daily	Gen. Sem. 1 hr. daily	Gen. Sem. 1 hr. daily	Seminar in Lang. Arts and Reading One per Week		Gen. Sem. 1 hr. daily	Gen. Sem. 1 hr. daily	Gen. Sem. 1 hr. daily	Seminar in Math and Science One per week		Gen. Sem. 1 hr. daily	Gen. Sem. 1 hr. daily	Gen. Sem. 1 hr. daily	Seminar in Social Stds. One per week	

General Seminar--teaching strategies, planning, general methods, and other common elements.

Credit--6 credits of 300 level graduate work for methods courses
3 credits of graduate level credit for General Seminar
3 credits of Ed. Psych. suggested in P. M.

Figure B

EXAMPLES OF ORGANIZING STRANDS FOR GENERAL SEMINAR